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1 I am concerned about the hazards of transporting nuclear waste through St. Louis on trains and trucks. Because St. Louis has well-maintained highways, railroads, and bridges across the Mississippi River, routes through the city are likely to be chosen. Transportation accidents such as fire, derailling, collisions, and natural disasters could lead to toxic doses of radiation. Acts of sabotage and terrorism also present danger.

2 Over the period of 30 years 6000 shipments of spent nuclear fuel is likely to pass through St. Louis. The chances for an accident or sabotage are greatly increased when shipments occur approximately every other day over 30 years. In 1998 trains alone were involved in 73 grade-crossing collisions according to A Summary of Grade Crossing Collisions, 1998, published by the Division of Motor Carrier and Railroad Safety. Trains are required to slow to 30 mph downtown, 50 mph around 2.6 miles from downtown, and again slow to 30 mph at Kirkwood. West of Kirkwood trains resume speeds of 65 mph. However, most collisions occurred between speeds of 30 and 50 mph in daylight. 22% of crashes were with large trucks and 3% were with tractor trailers. A collision with a gas truck could derail a train. Moreover, shipping containers for nuclear waste have not been adequately tested to determine if they can withstand these hazards. Even if the nuclear waste does not travel through St. Louis, the duration and number of shipments poses risks to other communities through which transports travel.

3 Because of these risks I want to go on record opposing the removal of nuclear waste across the country. Instead store the waste at the plants where they were created until radioactivity has further decayed or until someone discovers a way to neutralize radioactive waste.

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